

Jenkins/Barlow Interview Script

(The caseworker arrives at the Barlow home and knocks on the screen door. A woman comes to the door.)

CW: Hi, Mrs. Barlow?

Client: Yes.

CW: I'm Terry Jenkins from Carnes County CYS. How are you this morning?

Client: Oh, doing pretty good.

CW: I noticed you have a lovely flowerbox hanging on the porch railing. Are you into gardening?

Client: A little. I'd like to do more, but, don't really have the time with working and looking after the house and kids.

CW: Sounds like you are pretty busy. By the way, I understand you have two dogs. I heard them barking as I drove up. I'm a little intimidated by big dogs. Where are they?

Client: I have them in a pen in the back yard. They won't bother us.

CW: Thanks, I appreciate that. Where would you like to talk?

Client: Come on inside. We can talk in the kitchen.

(Client leads the worker into the house, through the living room, which seems clean and in order, to the kitchen. The client points to one of the kitchen chairs. Terry Jenkins sits down.)

Client: Would you like anything to drink?

CW: A glass of water would be fine.

CW: Mrs. Barlow, how would you like me to address you?

Client: What do you mean?

CW: Would you prefer I call you Mrs. Barlow or Clara?

Jenkins/Barlow Interview Script (cont'd)

Client: Doesn't really matter, but, you can call me Clara. You're pretty young aren't you?

CW: I'm 23. What does that mean for you?

Client: Just curious. You been doing this job very long?

CW: I've been with Carnes County Children & Youth Service, we call it CYS, for about three months now. I wonder if you think I might be too young or inexperienced to understand you and your situation?

Client: (Chuckles) Well the thought did cross my mind.

CW: I hope my age won't get in the way. I'll do my best to try and understand what you are going through and to work with you to keep your children safe. If at any time you think I'm not tuned into you and your family, I'll trust you to let me know. Will you do that?

Client: (Chuckles again) You can count on that.

CW: What I would like to do today is to get as clear an idea as I can of what your experience has been since becoming involved with CYS and what we need to do together to resolve any of the issues that are a problem for you in taking care of your family and keeping the kids safe. Do you have any questions about that?

Client: No.

CW: Great. So, how have things changed since CYS became involved with you?

Client: Hmm (thinking for a few seconds). First of all, I can't say I really like it. When I burned Terrence's hand it was just a freak kind of thing where I lost my temper and flipped out. I don't make a habit of hurting my kids.

CW: I'm sure you don't. How did you feel when you got the visit from the CYS Intake worker?

Client: Pretty mad at first. I think there are a lot of people that do things a lot worse than I did. I didn't think I needed help or harassment from the government.

Jenkins/Barlow Interview Script (cont'd)

CW: So you thought it was unwelcome interference in your life.

Client: Exactly.

CW: What do you think now, about CYS in your life?

Client: It's been okay, and I have gotten some help through CYS.

CW: What exactly has been helpful to you?

Client: I've gotten help in getting the school to provide special programming for Terrence's ADHD. Before, they had him mainstreamed without any special help. I'd be getting calls all the time about him acting up in class. That's toned down a lot since he's gotten some special help.

CW: I'm glad to hear that. What else?

Client: Well, the in-home services I got helped me some with managing all the kids. I guess I was doing a lot of yelling and threatening. I think I'm getting better at letting the kids know exactly what I expect, letting them know I appreciate it when they do right. I think before I didn't pay attention to them until things got out of hand and I was really angry.

CW: Sounds like you have really done a good job in using the services. Is there anything about your experience with CYS or the in-home service that you didn't like, or wasn't useful?

Client: I think the caseworker before you had a little bit of an attitude.

CW: I'm not sure I know what you mean by attitude.

Client: Well, he was real critical of my dogs. He said they were a menace and Rottweilers and kids don't mix. I make sure the dogs are under control; and, the kids know how to treat them. I've never had one bit of trouble with the dogs. I felt he was talking down to me, like I was some kind of criminal or something for hurting Terrence. He did okay getting me some services, but I didn't like him much.

CW: I'm sorry that was your experience. What do you need from me for us to work well with each other?

Jenkins/Barlow Interview Script (cont'd)

Client: I guess just don't be like the last worker. If anybody needs an attitude check, it's him.

CW: What I'd like to do now is to go over the service plan and check on what's been done and what we still need to do. Do you have your copy of the plan?

Client: I don't think I ever got a plan.

CW: Hmm; I brought a copy of the plan with me. It has your signature and a date on it (CW shows client the signed service plan).

Client: That's my signature; so, I guess I did see the plan.

CW: If you can't find your copy I will send you another one along with a note about any changes we talk about today.

(Caseworker and client review the plan. After reviewing the plan, the worker continues the interview.)

CW: I'd like to talk with you about Terrence. How is his recovery coming along?

Client: He's doing fine. There haven't been any complications. He's expected to make a full recovery.

CW: That's good news. Recently, have you used physical punishment on Terrence or any of the other children?

Client: No.

CW: Have there been times when you felt like hitting the children, but didn't?

Client: Oh yes.

CW: How is it that you were able not to hit them?

Client: I think I am much more aware of my anger building. So, I try to stay more calm in general. And; let's face it, I don't want to hurt my kids or get into trouble with CYS or the law. I also have a better idea of what to do instead of hitting, thanks to the in-home services.

Jenkins/Barlow Interview Script (cont'd)

CW: I'm glad to hear that you thought this through and take the steps to keep your kids safe. I want to let you know that I will be talking with Terrence at school tomorrow and will be checking with the doctor on Terrence's recovery.

Client: No problem.

CW: Clara, I want to thank you for talking with me this morning. You were very clear with me about what you expect from our relationship and how you used services better to manage your anger and use other ways of disciplining the children. I will send you a copy of the plan you signed.

CW: I would like to meet with you again in two weeks to review the plan and prepare for the court review next month. Do you have your calendar handy?

(Clara gets her calendar. She and the worker set a date and time for the next visit.)

CW: How do you feel about how our meeting went today?

Client: To tell you the truth, I was a little nervous when you called to make the appointment, not knowing you and all. But, I think this is a good start; and, a lot better than the last worker, what's his name (laughs.)

CW: I was nervous too, but your honesty helped me to feel more comfortable; and, the fact you had the Rottweilers in their pen (both client and CW laugh.)

